

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1010

By Miller L

A RESOLUTION to recognize the musical contributions of Willie Mitchell and congratulate him upon receiving a Grammy Award.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to pay tribute to those noteworthy Tennesseans who, through their extraordinary musical talents, have earned the universal respect of their peers and fans alike; and

WHEREAS, throughout our illustrious history, Tennessee has been blessed with many exemplary citizens who have made significant contributions to various musical genres; and

WHEREAS, one such noteworthy person is Willie Mitchell, an outstanding musician who has become a permanent fixture of American music; and

WHEREAS, the Memphis music legend earned his first-ever Grammy at the Recording Academy's annual Special Merit Awards, held February 9, 2008, at a ceremony at the Los Angeles Ebell Theatre; and

WHEREAS, the prestigious, initiation-only event recognized both performers and industry figures for career achievement; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Mitchell was the deserving recipient of the prominent Trustee's Award for his stellar work behind the scenes as a producer, arranger, songwriter, and label head for Hi Records, where he became one of the architects of Southern soul music; affectionately nicknamed "Poppa Willie," he guided the careers of noted singers Ann Peebles, O.V. Wright, Otis Clay, and Al Green; and

WHEREAS, a gifted trumpeter, Memphis native Willie Mitchell launched his celebrated career after World War II and quickly became one of the era's most popular and influential band leaders, eventually producing a string of memorable instrumental hits, including "Soul Serenade" and "20-75"; and

WHEREAS, in the 1960s, Mr. Mitchell began working at Royal Studio before taking over the running of Hi Records in 1970; and

WHEREAS, he still owns and operates Hi Records to this day, and he has assembled arguably one of the greatest house bands ever, the Hi Rhythm Section; and

WHEREAS, Willie Mitchell is perhaps best known for his peerless achievements as an award-winning producer; he discovered the legendary singer, Al Green, and molded his million-selling career; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Mitchell also created a sophisticated; groove-fueled Memphis soul sound which continues to be imitated; and

WHEREAS, Willie Mitchell is still in high demand as an arranger and producer and works each day in the studio on high-profile projects, such as those by pop star John Mayer and contemporary R&B star Anthony Hamilton, and continues to work with Al Green on various projects; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Willie Mitchell's outstanding success as a musician and producer is directly attributable to his reliance on the time-honored values of hard work and creative energy and his uncommon ability to work well with people from all walks of life; and

WHEREAS, at the Grammy festivities, a video tribute was presented that applauded his countless talents, heralding him as "the Memphis sound's renaissance man;" the tribute also chronicled the breadth and scope of Mitchell's lasting impact on the music world from 1950s Beale Street, to 1970s R&B, to the neo-soul movement of today; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to pause in its deliberations to acknowledge Mr. Willie "Poppa" Mitchell for his many worthwhile contributions to the music industry and applaud him for his prodigious production of highly entertaining music; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby congratulate Mr. Willie "Poppa" Mitchell upon his receipt of the Grammy's Trustee's Award, recognize his multitudinous contributions to American popular music and culture, and wish him continued success in his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.